Measures against the spread of hazardous Weeds of foreign origin

*147. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the spread of Parthenium and Lantana weeds in northern parts of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to uproot these foreign weeds from the country;

(c) whether Government propose to take precautionary measures against the spread of hazardous and killer weeds/shrubs of foreign origin in the country; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have taken the following steps to control Parthenium and Lantana weeds:—

1. *Parthenium*

(i) Recommended measures to control the weed are as under:—

—Physical removal of weed soon after the on-set of monsoon

— Foliar spray of 15 per cent common salt solution, spray of 2,4-D on young plants and Paraquat on matured plants.

— Blanket spray of Paraquat and Diuron/Atrazine to check the emergence of weed.

— Mobilisation of community efforts.

(ii) Publicity through Akashvani and Doordarshan for weed control measures and distribution of literature on control of weed to States.

(iii) Intensification of research efforts for evolving better weed management practices.

2. *Lantana*

The recommendations for control of Lantana weed are as under: -

(i) Cutting of Lantana bushes 5 to 7.5 cm above ground level in September.

(ii) Spraying of 1 per cent Glyphosate solution in October and November on re-generated foliage.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is making efforts to develop biological measures to control Lantana weed. Larvae of some insects including a few butter flies, seed fly and Lantana bug have been identified to be host specific parasites to this weed. Further reasearch on parasites is continuing.

(c) and (d) Weeds of foreign origin are mostly introduced in the country through the bulk import of foodgrains. Therefore, importation of foodgrains/seeds has been brought under the purview of the Plants, Fruits and Seeds (Regulation of Import into India) Order 1984/1989. As such, Plant Quarantine regulations are now imposed to ward off the entry of exotic weeds through such imports

Agreements Forced by news paper employers for foregoing benefits of Bachawat Award

*148. SHRI KAPIL VERMA

SHRIMATI SATYA BAHIN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the newspaper employers are forcing their employees to sign agreements for foregoing the full benefits of the Bachawat Wage Board recommendations; if so, what action Government propose to take to protect the workers' interests; and

(b) what is the legal status of such agreements made under duress, depriving the workers of their dues under notification issued by Government, if these are illegal, what action is being taken to declare them void?